THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) It is primarily the responsibility of the State Government concerned to take necessary relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction measures in the wake of natural calamities. Subsequent to the earthquake of 26th January, 2001 the Government of Gujarat has set up the Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) to coordinate the massive rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. According to available information, an expenditure of Rs.684 crore has been incurred on various relief activites in the wake of the earthquake. Steps have also been initiated by the State Government for rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected sectors and sufficient progress has been achieved.

In addition to release of Central share of Calamity Relief Fund, assistance from the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) amounting to Rs.1467.37 crore was released to Gujarat in the wake of earthquake. It may also be mentioned that a number of programmes/schemes are implemented by various Central Ministries/Departments and the State Government towards long-term measures for rehabilitation of the affected sectors. The Eleventh Finance Commission has also recommended that restoration of works of capital nature damaged during the natural calamity *viz.* roads, bridges, power houses and other public works should ordinarily be met from normal budgetary heads except when it is to be incurred as part of providing immediate relief.

Diversification of crops, livestock and fisheries in A.P.

165. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh Government has approached the Union Government to extend full support and provide funds for its efforts to diversify crops, livestock and fishery enterprises, to match the emerging demand patterns;

(b) if so, the details of the requirements of the State in this regard; and

(c) whether necessary funds have been released; if so, when and if not, by when the same are expected to be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) No Sir, no specific

proposal for assistance for diversification process has so far been received by the Ministry of Agriculture from the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Crop damage due to unseasonal rain in Andhra Pradesh

166. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether unseasonal rain in the first week of January,2002 has adversely affected and damaged the Groundnuts, Paddy, Bengal, Gram, Tabacco, Maize and Cotton crops in several districts of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether the hailstorms also inflicted heavy damage to crops in many districts;

(c) whether Central Government were approached by the State Government for help to meet the situation and provide relief to farmers; and

(d) if so, what is Government's response in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) Ministry of Agriculture have not received any such report or request from the State Government for the purpose of assistance from National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF).

Steering Group on Agriculture

167. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether report of the Steering Group onAgriculture and Allied Sectors has since been received;

(b) if so, what are its main recommendations, especially with regard to retaining 500 million youths to the farm sector;

(c) whether the committee has also proposed a scheme for development of waste land in a big way all over the country and warned Government of water shortage, emerging as a major issue in the near future; and

(d) if so, what is the decision of Government and the steps being taken on each of the recommendation?